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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

Request for a subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research resulting from the recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Institute on the work programme of the Institute for 2018-2019

Third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the note by the Secretary-General (A/72/369) on the request for a subvention of $2,074,700 (before recosting) to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) resulting from the recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Institute on the work programme of the Institute for 2018-2019 (see A/72/185). During its consideration of the request, the Committee met with the Director of the Institute and representatives of the Secretariat, who provided additional information and clarifications.

2. The request for a subvention to UNIDIR for the biennium 2018-2019 is presented in the note of the Secretary-General in accordance with part IV, paragraph 2, of resolution 60/248, in which the General Assembly endorsed the proposal that the request for a subvention to UNIDIR be submitted for review and approval by the Assembly on a biennial basis in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the related biennium. The Advisory Committee notes that the request is consistent with what is contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, which includes, under section 4, Disarmament, a provision for $2,074,700 (before recosting) representing the United Nations subvention to UNIDIR for 2018-2019. The Advisory Committee also notes that it has considered the UNIDIR subvention in its review of three separate reports: the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director of UNIDIR on the activities of the Institute for the period from January to December 2016 and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2017 and 2018 (A/72/154); the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 4) and Corr.1); and the note of the Secretary-General on the UNIDIR subvention. **In the future, the Advisory Committee will only make comments and**

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recommendations on the subvention in the context of its consideration of subsequent requests of the Secretary-General to be submitted in his note on the matter.

3. The Advisory Committee further notes that extrabudgetary resources for the trust fund for UNIDIR are projected to be $5,042,000 in the biennium 2018-2019 (see A/72/6 (Sect. 4), para. 4.15).

4. The General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of its resolution 70/69, requested the Secretary-General as an exceptional, one-off measure to preserve the future of the Institute and without setting a precedent, to submit, in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, a funding proposal taking into account additional resources in the light of the recommendations contained in the latest report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/70/186). The Secretary-General's proposal for 2018-2019 includes an amount of $1,774,700 to cover the requirements of institutional core staffing of UNIDIR (see para. 5 below) and an amount of $300,000 to cover the costs of an assessment by an independent third party on the future structural, financial, administrative and operational aspects of the Institute (see A/72/369, para. 9). That assessment would put forward proposals for a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model required for the Institute to achieve its mandate and objectives of the Institute beyond the biennium 2018-2019, as requested by the Assembly in its resolution 70/69 (see para. 6 below). During its consideration of the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposal contains a one-time increase of $1,524,700, in addition to the current level of the subvention ($550,000 at the 2016-2017 revised rate). The Committee notes that the proposed subvention amounts to a threefold increase in the subvention level from the current biennium.

5. With regard to the regular budget funding requirement of institutional core staffing of UNIDIR, the Secretary-General noted that an internal assessment conducted in 2016 concluded that a core staff of four was deemed appropriate to carry out the Institute's essential institutional functions, composed of the following posts: one Director (D-2); one Chief of Operations (P-5); one Finance and Budget Officer (P-3); and one Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)) (see A/72/369, para. 3). The Secretary-General also indicated in his report on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters that the Board reiterated its view that the annual subvention be increased to cover the costs of the entire institutional staff of five, including the position of Chief of Research, to further strengthen research design and integrity (see A/72/185, para. 39). The Advisory Committee reaffirms its recommendation to approve the resources needed to cover the costs of the four institutional staff included in the proposed UNIDIR subvention, as set out in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

6. With respect to the $300,000 in proposed requirements for the third-party assessment of UNIDIR included in the request for the subvention, the Secretary-General indicated that the resources would be managed and implemented by the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat in close collaboration with the United Nations Office at Geneva (see A/72/369, para. 9). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the assessment would be conducted over a three-month period, from mid-January to mid-to-late April 2018, but was not provided with further detail on the monthly cost or the scope of the work to be completed in the limited time available. The Advisory Committee reaffirms its recommendation on the UNIDIR subvention provided in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, in which the Committee recommended the reduction of $100,000 in the proposed additional funds dedicated to the independent assessment (see A/72/7, part II, sect. 4).

7. Taking into account the recommendation of the Advisory Committee contained in paragraph 5 above, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the request for the subvention in the amount of $1,974,700 (before recosting) from the regular budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2018-2019, for which a provision has already been included under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium.